

To: R2 EPA NY NJ PR VI (EPA Staff)[R2_EPA_NY_NJ_PR_VI_EPA_Staff@epa.gov]
From: Shore, Berry
Sent: Thur 2/11/2016 2:28:00 PM
Subject: Hoosick POFA Clips

Critical of Alerts About Hoosick Falls Water Crisis;

Lawmakers cite March note about toxic chemical not regulated; timeline wrong

By Brendan J. Lyons, Rick Karlin and Casey Seiler

February 10, 2016

It's a question frequently aimed at politicians: What did they know, and when did they know it?

In the case of water contamination in Hoosick Falls, a village-produced timeline that describes months of outreach to elected officials has been disputed by several state and federal lawmakers.

State Sen. Kathy Marchione, U.S. Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles E. Schumer, and Congressman Chris Gibson said that the timeline posted on the village of Hoosick Falls' website stating they were first "updated" on the situation in December 2014 is not accurate.

Instead, the elected officials insist they were first notified last March about the contamination — though the state Health Department and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency informed them little could be done because the toxic chemical was not a regulated contaminant.

Village leaders were first alerted to the water contamination in July 2014 by a resident, Michael Hickey, whose father had died of kidney cancer. Hickey researched a man-made chemical, perfluorooctanoic acid, that has been used since the 1940s to make industrial and household products, like nonstick coatings and heat-resistant wiring, including at a factory owned by Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics near the village water treatment plant.

Elevated levels of PFOA were later found in the village water system and also a series of private wells in and the around the village.

In the past week, some state lawmakers, including Marchione and Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin, have called for legislative hearings to determine whether health agencies acted swiftly enough in notifying the public about the potential dangers of consuming the contaminated water. It took more than a year for village leaders, the state Health Department and the EPA to warn residents to stop drinking the water.

The village timeline also said the village's mayor, David B. Borge, contacted Gov. Andrew Cuomo last fall but was told the governor was "unavailable for a meeting" on the issue.

Cuomo's office confirmed the outreach but said it offered in October to set up a meeting with Sabrina Ty, head of the state Environmental Facilities Corp., and Peter Walke, at the time the governor's assistant secretary for the environment, about securing funding for a filtration system for the municipal water system. The following month, Saint-Gobain agreed to pay for the filtration system.

Other elected officials said the timeline on the website is not accurate.

"The mayor of Hoosick Falls first reached out to our office in March of 2015 and asked for help funding a new water filtration system and also expressed concerns about PFOA," said Marc Brumer, a spokesman for Gillibrand. "We immediately brought the mayor's concerns about PFOA to the EPA's attention and also requested EPA's help funding the water filtration system. At the time the EPA told our office that there were no standards in place for it to regulate PFOA and so there was no specific enforcement action they could take."

Schumer spokesman Jason Kaplan said the office had "no record of any communication in 2014."

"We did receive a letter dated March 10, 2015, from Mayor Borge, that summarized the situation, asked for our assistance, and that stated, 'the NYS Department of Health recently published a public notice specific to Hoosick Falls in which it determined that there were no immediate health risks associated with our drinking water.'" Kaplan also said the office sought funding for the filtration system.

Stephanie Valle, a spokeswoman for Gibson, said their office also was first contacted last March.

"The village at that point was looking for funding," Valle said. "We reached out to the EPA. The response we received from the EPA was that it was an unregulated issue, there was nothing that the EPA could do."

The EPA was first notified about the contamination in December 2014. That month, Saint-Gobain disclosed the contamination problem in a letter to the EPA and an official took part in a discussion about the problem with state and Rensselaer County health officials, according to emails released last week by the county executive's office.

Mary Mears, an EPA spokeswoman, confirmed the agency learned of the contamination that month but said a lack of regulation for PFOA was a factor in their response.

"The EPA's drinking water experts reached out to New York state regulators and in the course of a few days were able to ascertain that the state and county health agencies were working with the village and that the one well with levels of PFOA above the EPA advisory level of 400 parts per trillion was reportedly taken off line," Mears said. "PFOA is an emerging contaminant and there is new science. ... These contaminants aren't regulated, because until recently, we didn't know the extent to which they ended up in our water, the extent to which they stayed in our drinking water, or what health impacts might result."

Judith Enck, the EPA regional administrator, said she did not learn about the situation until last fall. In November, she wrote a letter to the village urging leaders to warn against drinking the water.

In a written statement Tuesday, Marchione said she was first notified about the problem last March.

"My office has continually offered assistance to the village of Hoosick Falls and has taken part in multiple meetings convened by the village and town to determine the best way to protect public health, fully address the issue and secure state assistance," Marchione said. The senator backpedaled from statements she made earlier Tuesday when she said on WCNY's "Capitol Pressroom" radio show that holding legislative hearings was under discussion, and that they would be "a good starting point for all parties."

McLaughlin said his best recollection was that the first outreach from the village was in March — at the community's St. Patrick's Day parade. He emphasized that there was no sense of urgency in the request for assistance.

After the interview, state Senate Republican Majority Leader John Flanagan said he believed the first priority should be to "fix the problem."

Hearings "would sort of be at the end of the cycle," he said. " ... Fixing the problem would be more important than trying to figure out who to blame."

Late Tuesday afternoon, Marchione said she had spoken with Borge.

"The mayor felt that at this time the primary focus should be the state, county, town and village working together with all stakeholders to get a solution in place," she said. "We could look at holding a public hearing sometime in the future."

Borge, in a written response late Wednesday, said he had contact with state and federal officials.

"Once we received the first sample results in November 2014, I notified state and federal officials of the results, either by phone or email correspondence," Borge said. "I continued to keep everyone apprised on a regular basis, again by phone or email. Some of these discussions were with the elected officials themselves; others were with staff from their offices."

The Times Union reported Sunday that the state Health Department was informed in August 2014 that the toxic chemical had contaminated the village water system, but it took months before the public was formally notified, and more than a year for the state to adopt the EPA's position that water should not be consumed.

The timeline assembled by the village of Hoosick Falls — with assistance from a public relations firm, Behan Communications — details the outreach village leaders said they made to elected officials as far back as December 2014 seeking assistance in dealing with the growing realization that the town's water supply showed unsafe levels of the toxic compound.

The summary for December 2014 states, "Village officials update the offices of Congressman Chris Gibson, U.S. Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, NYS Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin, NYS Senator Kathy Marchione, Rensselaer County Executive Kathy Jimino, county legislators, and town officials."

On Tuesday, Marchione explained that the official response stumbled in part on the fact that PFOA was not at the time a state-regulated substance. Several other states moved years ago to set safe levels of PFOA.

"I think because PFOA was not regulated ... it caused a great deal of confusion," the Halfmoon Republican said on the "Capitol Pressroom" radio show. "And I think because of that confusion I think things moved slower than they would have moved if PFOA had already been on the hazardous list."

At the end of last month, Cuomo met with Borge, Marchione, Hoosick Falls Schools

Superintendent Ken Facin and Hoosick town Supervisor Mark Surdam after the Times Union reported that state Health Department officials had instructed town officials not to publicly release the results of private well tests — some of which showed elevated levels of PFOA. The Health Department cited the privacy rights of the private well owners.

Immediately following the meeting with Cuomo, the governor's administration announced PFOA would be listed as a hazardous chemical, an action that would help the state to declare the affected area as a Superfund site, which will qualify it for faster remediation.

The EPA is also stepping up its efforts on regulating the chemical.

"EPA is currently using the best science to develop a lifetime health advisory level for PFOA, which the agency expects to release in spring 2016," said Mears, the EPA's spokeswoman.

Still, despite their involvement in the situation dating to last spring, some lawmakers have questioned why it took more than a year from the time that concerns were first raised to warn the public.

McLaughlin has in recent weeks taken to social media to lambaste the administration.

"Am I mad? Oh yeah. I'm mad," McLaughlin, a Republican and frequent Cuomo critic, wrote Feb. 1 on Facebook. "This situation should have been addressed long ago."

Hoosick Falls Mayor: Agreement Expected with Saint Gobain Regarding Cleanup Costs

By TWC News Web Staff

Wednesday, February 10, 2016 at 06:55 AM EST

HOOSICK FALLS, N.Y. -- Hoosick Falls Mayor David Borge says an agreement is expected to be reached Wednesday with Saint-Gobain regarding cleanup costs.

A board meeting was held Tuesday night. It was the first one since the state declared a superfund site in the village last month.

PFOA, a potentially cancer-causing chemical, was found in the water supply, and traced back to the Saint Gobain plant in the village.

Mayor Borge has been criticized for not telling people to stop drinking the water sooner. He says he was following what the Department of Health advised him to do, but does call the criticism justifiable.

Activists also addressed concerns about information presented at a public meeting with state agencies in December.

"They gave out the wrong information. You know why they gave out the wrong information? They were looking at data that was 20 plus years old. They never looked at the c8 Science Panel results. And yet they offered that opinion. Then we found out, shortly after they completely changed their opinion," said Kevin Allard, a former village board member.

Other questions regarding exposure to the chemical and blood tests, along with the impact on the economy and property values were also discussed.

Petition calls for Hoosick Falls officials' resignations

Mary Wilson

Published: February 10, 2016, 10:57 pm | Updated: February 10, 2016, 11:27 pm

ABC News Channel 10

HOOSICK FALLS, N.Y. (NEWS10) – A petition is gathering signatures to call for the resignation of two village officials over their handling of the water contamination in Hoosick Falls.

Jason Chaplin spent the first 25 years of his life living in Hoosick Falls. He started a petition calling for the resignation of the mayor and deputy mayor for their response to the water contamination issue.

He said it was 14 months too late.

“I think people are still really upset that the people who allowed this to happen are the ones that are making the decisions going forward,” he said.

The petition was posted on change.org on Wednesday. It has already received several comments. Many people claim they can't trust the officials because of the timeline of events regarding the water issue.

The village conducted testing in October 2014, which confirmed high levels of a chemical called PFOA, but the public was not notified of the contamination until November 2015.

NEWS10 ABC was not able to reach Mayor David Borge on Wednesday, but in previous interviews, he has defended his actions because he said PFOA hadn't, yet, been classified as toxic.

“Once the two departments – the health department as well as the EPA – clarified their statements, we then notified people immediately,” he previously said.

Chaplin said Borge had an ethical obligation to tell the public once he was aware of the test results.

“It’s not his decision to make for the community,” he claimed.

But not everyone believes the mayor should lose his job over the village’s response.

“I’m kind of surprised,” Hoosick Falls resident Oliver Crawford said. “I mean, I don’t know how much of his fault it is, to be honest with you.”

Even if the petition does garner thousands of signatures, Chaplin admits it may not accomplish anything other than sending a strong message.

“But the people are still outraged,” he said. “The people in the town are still upset. They’re not being answered.”

The issue goes beyond the petition. Assembly members will hold hearings on the slow response by state and local officials in April.

Water concerns flood Hoosick Falls board meeting

WNYT Staff

Updated: 02/10/2016 10:46 AM

Created: 02/09/2016 5:36 PM

Channel 13 News Albany

HOOSICK FALLS - There was a big turnout Tuesday evening at a board meeting in Hoosick Falls, a village dealing with a water crisis right now.

The Armory was packed with people demanding answers and expressing concerns with high levels of PFOA discovered in their drinking water. That's a chemical that's been linked to cancer.

Mayor Dave Borge announced people can keep getting free bottled water until October when the permanent filtration system is finished.

He also responded to questions about why people weren't told to drink bottled water until about a year after the issue was brought to the board's attention.

"I feel like government let us down they failed us not just the village level but several levels above them," explained one of the attendees.

"We tried to get as much information as we can out there now we've been criticized and justifiably so for not getting the info out now were working on that," explained Borge.

He says they're about to finalize a deal with Saint-Gobain that says the company will pay for all the bottled water and the filtration systems.

Water-related questions persist in Hoosick Falls: Close to 150 residents attend village board meeting

By Edward Damon, edamon@berkshireeagle.com @BE_EDamon on Twitter

Posted: 02/09/2016 10:08:21 PM EST

Bershire Eagle

HOOSICK FALLS, — Residents continue to raise their concerns over local and state officials' response to the village's water contamination.

Close to 150 people attended the village board's meeting Tuesday night, where Mayor David Borge gave updates on efforts to remediate tainted water and answered the public's questions, among them:

How will local sites being declared as Superfunds impact the local economy, tax rates and property values? Will corporations invest funds to help the village's recovery?

And why did it take so long for village residents to be told the water contained a chemical linked to cause cancer?

The latter was asked of Borge by a woman who said she did not receive any notice about the water issue until November of 2015, about a year after village officials learned about the Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA). Although Borge said the village did mail all water users a notice in late 2014.

"We've been criticized, perhaps justifiably so, for not getting information out as quickly as we might have. But now we're working on that," Borge said in response to the question.

Borge, addressing the public and members of the news media gathered at the Armory, reiterated that his and others' goals were to bring clean water as quickly as possible.

"I can say to you that since Nov. 14 (2014) at every single board meeting, this was discussed. "Samples were made available, letters were sent out... If we could do things differently, perhaps we would."

Borge indicated that, since testing for PFOA is not required by the federal government

and new science is constantly emerging about PFOA and other chemicals, the steps the village should have taken were not clear at the time, and he and others followed instructions of public health officials.

"We checked with the state and county health departments to determine what steps needed to be taken," Borge said. "We learned it was an unregulated contaminant, we had to find out how it would be sampled. We learned there were very few labs that could test it... At the time, we were told there were three labs in the country and one in Canada."

Some residents who spoke called for more transparency and more consistent information from state agencies.

Kevin Allard took issue with information presented at a public meeting held by the state Department of Health and Department of Conservation.

"They were looking at data that was 20 years old," Allard said. "They never looked at the C8 Science Panel results. And then we found out they completely changed their opinion, and that's wrong."

Allard said there needs to be an investigation at the state level.

"No other community deserves to be treated the way the DOH treated this village, [the village] board and the residents," he said.

Allard was among a few residents who said the village should not agree to have its water treatment plant upgraded by the Saint-Gobain Corporation, and called for a new water source.

One man called for more community involvement with addressing the water issue and suggested local boards or task groups be founded.

Village resident and former board member Michael Hickey approached officials in August 2014 about the water containing PFOA. The man-made chemical was once used in making nonstick coatings and wire insulation and has been linked to cancer.

Contact Edward Damon at 413-770-6979

Cuomo strikes contrasting tones at Hoosick Falls and Indian Point: Cuomo-strikes-contrasting-tones-hoosick-falls-and-indian-point

By Scott Waldman 5:14 a.m. | Feb. 10, 2016 3

Politico

ALBANY — It was a tale of two cautionary responses.

On Saturday, Gov. Andrew Cuomo issued a rare weekend public statement to warn New Yorkers that the water around the Indian Point nuclear center had “alarming levels of radioactivity.” He ordered yet another state investigation of Indian Point and said the release of radioactive tritium-contaminated water leaked into the groundwater at the facility was another reason to see the plant closed.

Two days later, in Albany, he cautioned against a rush to judgment on the water pollution in Hoosick Falls. Cuomo said he wanted to wait for more “facts” and cautioned that banks should not be withholding the writing of mortgages until more results had been returned. He said he was waiting for another round of water well tests to come back, even though earlier rounds already proved that toxic levels of a chemical linked to cancer was in the water. Cuomo claimed the state would be “overprotective” in Hoosick Falls and chided people who would let emotions get “ahead of facts.”

While Cuomo was “deeply concerned” about the leak at Indian Point, he seemed more concerned about untoward panic among residents at Hoosick Falls, despite the fact that

the water in Hoosick Falls has been poisoned, and the water near Indian Point is safe to consume.

It already has been verified that the water in Hoosick Falls exceeds federal pollution standards, by at least four or five times what the Environmental Protection Agency has said is safe for humans to consume. What's more, the toxic chemical PFOA is definitely in the water of Hoosick Falls and the people there have likely been drinking it for years, possibly generations. PFOA, or perfluorooctanoic acid, has been linked to unusual cancers and other life-threatening conditions, and medical professionals in town have documented high rates of cancers.

The state waited months to take significant action in Hoosick Falls, and assured residents as recently as December that the water was safe to drink. The state Department of Health, along with the village's elected leaders, have been widely criticized by residents as well as some lawmakers, who are now considering holding legislative hearings on the state's actions in Hoosick Falls.

And though the radioactivity levels in the water near Indian Point spiked upwards in recent weeks, it is still 1,000 times below federal limits. The wells that tested positive for elevated levels of radium (in one case it was a 65,000 percent increase) are designed for monitoring and not human consumption. The tritium, a naturally occurring radioactive isotope, found in the water at Indian Point will likely never reach a source of drinking water. About two-thirds of the nuclear plants in the nation have reported leaks of tritium into groundwater at levels above the federal benchmark.

Of course, Cuomo has a long and increasingly vocal desire to see Indian Point closed. Its operator, Entergy, has two ongoing lawsuits against the state. The Cuomo administration has been preparing for Indian Point's closure for years, and already signed off on one natural gas plant, powered by Pennsylvania's fracked gas, that has begun construction in the lower Hudson Valley. A second natural gas-fired plant is now winding its way through the state approval process.

While any leaks from a nuclear facility are serious, Indian Point should be viewed in its proper context and focus should be shifted to remediation, Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino, who ran against Cuomo in 2014, said in a statement.

“Getting the facts and understanding them are critically important to serving the public interest,” Astorino said. “False hysteria is not.”

But Democratic lawmakers from the Hudson Valley, including U.S. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, state Senate minority leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and state Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti, quickly joined the governor’s call for Indian Point’s closure.

As legislators stalked the Capitol’s hallways over the last few weeks, however, virtually none saw fit to hold an emergency news conference about the unfolding disaster in Hoosick Falls, about 30 miles to the northeast of Albany in Rensselaer County, where 4,000 residents wonder whether they or their children will get cancer from the water they drank.

Assembly schedules hearings on water quality in wake of Hoosick Falls crisis

POLITICO New York

By Scott Waldman 5:30 p.m. | Feb. 10, 2016

ALBANY — In light of the ongoing water pollution crisis in Hoosick Falls, the state Assembly has scheduled hearings for April to discuss water quality issues around the state.

A bipartisan coalition of Assembly members wants to hold immediate hearings on the slow response by state and local officials to the situation in Hoosick Falls, as well as the extent of the pollution. The water in Hoosick Falls contains high levels of the toxic chemical PFOA, which has been linked to cancer and other serious health problems.

The hearings in April will focus more broadly on water quality issues statewide, which will presumably include aging infrastructure, said Michael Whyland, spokesman for Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie.

Whyland mention the situation in Hoosick Falls in the same sentence as Flint, Michigan, where government malfeasance exposed an entire city to lead poisoning in the city's water supply. The spokesman later clarified he was not comparing the two.

"In light of issues at places like Hoosick Falls and Flint, Michigan, we are planning hearings in April to examine statewide water quality issues," Whyland said. "These are hearings that would include our health and environmental conservation committees."

Republican Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin of Rensselaer County, who represents Hoosick Falls, conferred with Democrats who chair the two committees to formulate the April hearings. While McLaughlin, one of the Capitol's most outspoken critics of Gov. Andrew Cuomo, has already called for hearings, the support of Democrats makes the possibility more likely.

In a letter to environmental conservation chairman Steve Englebright and health committee chairman Richard Gottfried, McLaughlin said people's lives are on the line and questioned why the state abruptly pivoted from declaring Hoosick Falls' water safe to declaring the village a Superfund site.

"I'm writing to you today not only because the well-being of Hoosick Falls' residents is in jeopardy, but I believe they are the victims of the biggest environmental and health crisis, and potential cover-up, that's rocked New York State in the last decade," McLaughlin wrote.

Englebright said he agreed with McLaughlin that hearings must be held and said they should examine possible governmental failures as well as the complicity of industry in using harmful chemicals.

"I don't think it makes sense to only focus on just one site or one chemical or the failures of government alone," he said. "I would like to explore ... the larger implications and that would include how this and other similar contaminants got into the environment in the first place. That means looking at the source which industries did this insult to the environment, did they know, should they be held liable."

In a joint statement, Englebright and Gottfried said they were troubled by the numerous contaminants in drinking water.

"Drinking water should be safe and clean. The recent events in Flint, Michigan, and most recently in Hoosick Falls highlight the threats to water purity and need to be scrutinized," they said.

On Tuesday, Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan said he was open to hearings on Hoosick Falls, but wants to fix the problem first. Cuomo has said he wants more "facts" about Hoosick Falls, where multiple tests have shown dangerous levels of pollution, but has offered only praise for his administration's health department.

For more than a year, the state health department assured residents of the small upstate village that their water was safe to drink, then abruptly reversed that stance after the federal Environmental Protection Agency issued a stern warning that drinking or cooking with the water was dangerous.

In the last few weeks, Cuomo and top administration officials have sought to portray their response as aggressive, but local residents and some lawmakers continue to criticize the extensive delays.

Clifton Park suggests a CHIPs program for water infrastructure

By Dennis Yusko on February 10, 2016 at 4:43 PM

Times Union – Saratoga Bog

A string of rare cancer deaths in Hoosick Falls has residents concerned about their water supply.

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As concern grows over contaminated water in Hoosick Falls, one Capital Region town

thinks it's time for state leaders to start awarding annual funding for underground infrastructure improvements the same way it does for highway repairs.

The Town Board recently passed a resolution calling on New York to adopt an annual funding program for upgrading municipal sanitary sewer, drinking water and storm water systems. It suggested modeling the program after CHIPS – the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program – which provides funding to localities for road maintenance each year through formulas based on motor vehicle registrations, highway miles and other factors.

Distributing annual funding for water and sewer improvements through a regular formula rather than awarding grants would create a more equitable model of financing that municipalities could depend on, Supervisor Philip Barrett said. It would also help ensure the integrity of locally owned and aging infrastructure in the wake of recent water emergencies in Hoosick Falls, Troy and Flint, Mich.

“It would be a tremendous infusion of capital that would benefit every resident of New York State,” Barrett said.

The idea has generated inquiries from state legislators, but no sponsors yet. The town resolution notes that many municipal water and sewer systems in the state were constructed decades ago under different regulatory standards, and require consistent maintenance and monitoring. Underground pipes in Mechanicville and Saratoga Springs are more than 100 years old.

Clifton Park Supervisor Philip Barrett during the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors swearing in ceremony and meeting on Jan. 3, 2012 in Ballston Spa (Philip Kamrass / Times Union)

Clifton Park Supervisor Philip Barrett during the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors swearing in ceremony and meeting on Jan. 3, 2012 in Ballston Spa (Philip Kamrass / Times Union)

“In general our infrastructure is younger than many other municipalities,” Barrett recently told Sen. Hugh Farley (R-Niskayuna) “However, our town has large neighborhoods developed in the 1960s. Therefore, we have aging systems in many areas.” (see letter below)

State Assemblyman Jim Tedisco (R-Glenville) likes the town's idea. "I am going to be reaching out to the governor, the leaders and all my colleagues to seek support in the budget for the creation of a dedicated CHIPS-like infrastructure maintenance program for our local municipalities."

South Orange Awaiting Testing for 6 Sites in Water System

By: Mary Mann

February 9, 2016

Village News

South Orange officials are awaiting receipt of containers from a California-based company to test PFOA levels at six sites within the town's water system.

When the township has the results of those tests, a public meeting will be held with a representative of the New Jersey State Department of Environmental Protection in attendance to answer questions.

South Orange Village Trustee Walter Clarke provided these and other updates at Monday's meeting of the Village Board of Trustees. "We will then have the same independent company that tests for VOCs for us collect the samples," Clarke wrote in a followup email. "We think the standard turnaround time is 2-3 weeks," but Clarke said he expects that the turnaround may be longer as there are "many other towns in several states also dealing with this issue who must be lined up at this one facility."

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Clarke and other South Orange officials echoed information distributed in January when the township issued a press release explaining that a specific chemical, PFOA (which is in the family of PFCs), was found in levels exceeding the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's guidelines in Well 17. PFOA is a "likely carcinogen," according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

The water well test yielded a result of 58 ppt (parts per trillion) — significantly below the Federal EPA Public Health Advisory level of 400 ppt which is for short term exposure (defined as weeks to months) but did exceed the NJ DEP guideline amount of 40 ppt which is for chronic or lifetime exposure which is defined as 70 years.

The South Orange release explained that, since the well water is 10% of the supply and is mixed with other water, levels in residents' water should be well below the federal guidelines.

In response to a public comment on Monday night asking that the town make a chart of where water was flowing and mixing within the system as it related to Well 17, Trustee Clarke said that the township did "have our water consultants attempting to make that water flow example." However, Clarke said it was "easier said than done" as many variables affected flow, such as who was turning taps on or off around town at any given time.

Clarke said that the town's vision was as follows: "Our hope is that we can get the water back to where it is safe to consume." (As in the initial release, officials repeatedly stated during Monday's meeting that the rates from Well 17 were considered hazardous only if the water was consumed over a 70 year period.)

Clarke added that PFOA is not a regulated chemical. "Right now, it is sort of a suggestion by the state and the feds," said Clarke. He also noted, "basically pure water doesn't exist outside of a lab and that includes pristine mountain streams." Clarke added, "In terms of strategies, right now, our first step is to get a bead on how widespread [PFOAs are] and what the concentrations are."

Village Counsel Steve Rother said that "as the EPA and DEP begin to deal with PFCs

we will get better info on how to deal with it.” He added that the town was in the process of obtaining a new water source — New Jersey American Water as of Jan. 1, 2017 — and a new operator. “We are on the cutting edge of this,” said Rother. “We will be willing to do what is needed going forward.

In response to a question about filtration, Clarke noted that typical residential water filters did not work on PFCs and PFOA and asked residents for their help in researching filters and coming up with suggestions. Later, Clarke noted that PFCs were different than VOCs which could be removed from the system by “air strippers.” (An air stripper was, in fact, installed for Well 17 many years ago.)

Clarke told residents that there were no plans to take Well 17 out of the system for now or even after the new water system comes online in 2017. He noted that the well must function in order to keep the aquifer from flooding basements in the neighborhood. “We want to do whatever we have to do in terms of filtration or dilution to keep it functional,” said Clarke, who added that “only as a last resort” would the town take Well 17 off line and “pump its water out.”

Trustee Howard Levison said that the town was still working to “find out what this chemical is all about.” He reiterated that “the level of concentration is very, very low ... becoming a problem only if you drank it for 70 years.” Levison added, “Not that we aren’t concerned. We are concerned.” Levison noted that South Orange was also working very closely with the NJDEP and even was a part of a federal conversation on the chemical, with officials attending a meeting in Washington, D.C. in recent days.

Officials noted that information on the water situation would be continually updates at southorange.org.

Berry Shore, Intergovernmental Liaison

Region 2, USEPA

290 Broadway, 26th Floor

New York, NY 10007

tel.: (212) 637-3650